

13/50
COUNTY OF CAITHNESS

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ANNUAL REPORT

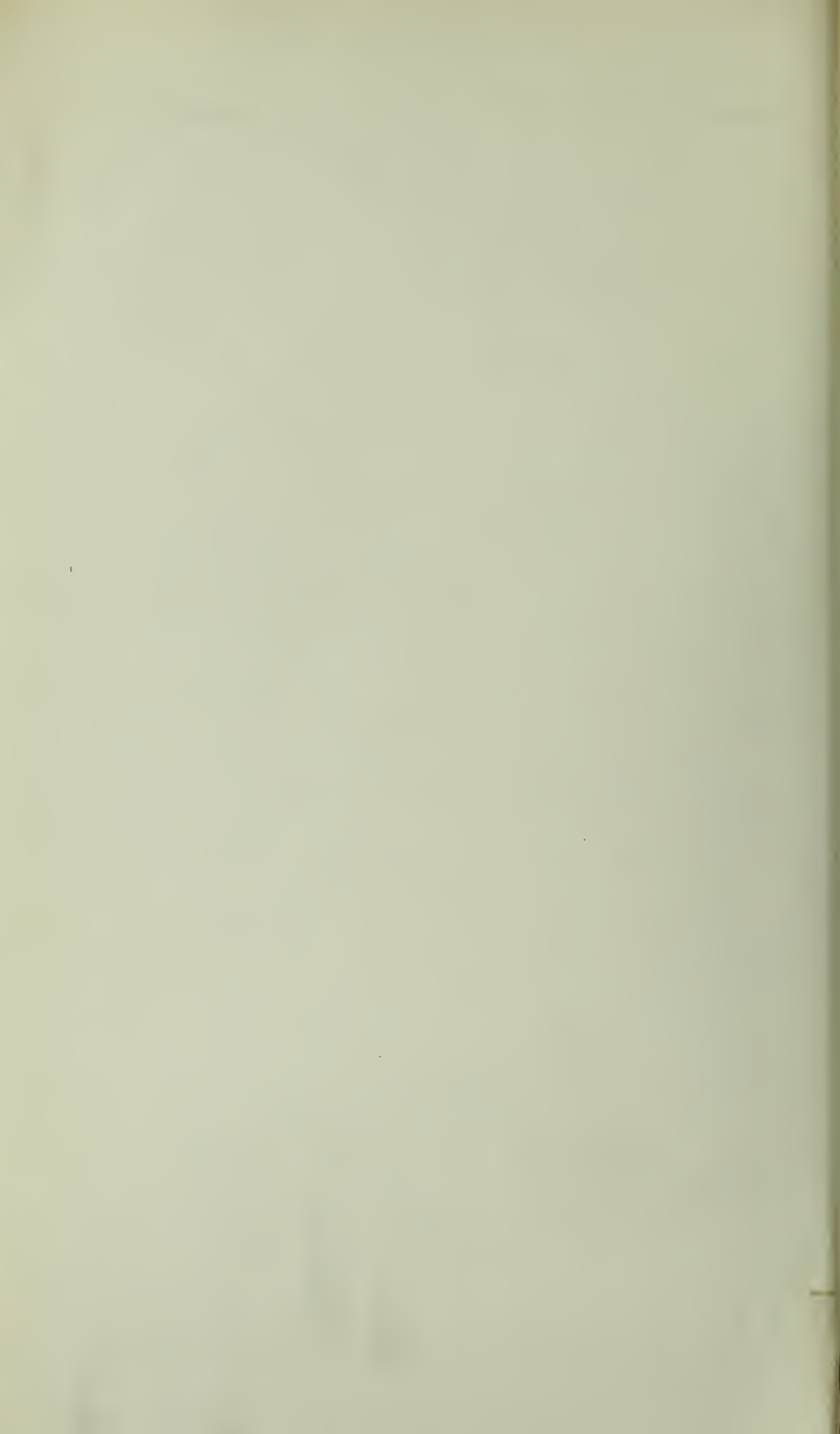
BY THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1952

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To the Department of Health for Scotland,

and the County Council of the County of Caithness.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the County of Caithness for the year ending 31st December, 1952.

Dr. A. F. McCoubrey resigned from the post of Medical Officer of Health and left the County in August, 1952. I did not take up duty until January, 1953. In the interim period Dr. D. A. Mackintosh acted as Medical Officer of Health.

The care of old people and the chronic sick continues to be a problem. Increased provision of domestic help and home nursing has provided only a partial solution. The demand for beds in institutions continues to exceed the amount of accommodation available.

The Infantile Mortality Rate was 51 per 1000, which is the highest figure for several years. The number of new cases of tuberculosis notified during the year was 20, an increase over 1951, but there has been no significant change in the death rate for tuberculosis. The comparatively small population of the County makes it probable that considerable variation in the statistics may occur from year to year due to chance, and it is necessary to compare the figures for several years to obtain a true picture of the various trends in mortality.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

C. N. Minto

Medical Officer of Health.

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COUNTY OF CAITHNESS

REPORT BY THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1952

VITAL STATISTICS

POPULATION:-

The Estimated Population for 1952, according to figures supplied by the Registrar General, was as follows.-

County of Caithness - Landward Area.....	12,361
Burgh of Wick.....	7,257
Burgh of Thurso.....	3,308
	<u>22,926</u>

The number of Births, Marriages and Deaths registered in the County, and in each of the Burghs, with corrected figures, is as follows.-

	<u>County.</u>	<u>Wick.</u>	<u>Thurso.</u>	<u>Totals.</u>
Total Births registered (including				
Illegitimate).....	154	211	8	373
Total Births - Corrected.....	215	140	55	410
" " " Males.....	112	78	22	212
" " " Females.....	103	62	33	198
" " " Illegitimate....	16	13	6	35
Still Births registered (including				
Illegitimate).....	4	3	-	7
Still Births - Corrected.....	4	2	3	9
Marriages registered.....	35	73	35	143
Deaths registered.....	192	77	29	298
Deaths Corrected.....	178	88	41	307
" " Males.....	74	36	20	130
" " Females.....	104	52	21	177

POPULATION AND DEATH RATES:-

Population estimated to middle of 1952.....	22,926
Birth Rate (Corrected)(per 1000 Estimated Population).....	17.9
Illegitimate Rate per 100 Births.....	8.5
Still Birth Rate per 1000 Births.....	21.0
Death Rate (Corrected)(per 1000 Estimated Population).....	13.4
Death Rate (Adjusted for age and sex distribution)(per 1000 Estimated Population).....	10.0

BIRTHS:-

The number of births registered during the past ten years is shown in the following Table.-

Year/



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<u>Year.</u>	<u>Number of Births.</u>	<u>Rate per 1000</u> <u>Estimated Population.</u>
1943	515	19.9
1944	475	18.9
1945	381	15.5
1946	505	21.3
1947	528	22.3
1948	461	19.5
1949	439	18.8
1950	429	18.8
1951	416	18.2
1952	410	17.9

Of the total live births, 35 were illegitimate, equal to a Rate of 8.5 per 100 births. This is an increase of 4.4 over last year. The Rate for Scotland as a whole is 4.8 per 100 live births.

STILL BIRTHS:-

There were 9 still births, giving a rate of 21 per 1000 total births, including still births, as compared with 11 in 1951, giving a rate of 26 per 1000 total births.

INFANTILE MORTALITY:-

The number of deaths of children under one year of age was 21, as compared with 15 in 1951. The Mortality Rate for the County was 51 per 1000 live births, as compared with 36 for the previous year. This is a marked increase over last year. It is wholly accounted for by deaths within one week of birth. The Rate for Scotland is 35 per 1000 live births.

The following Table gives the causes of death.-

	<u>Under</u> <u>1 Wk.</u>	<u>1-4</u> <u>Wks.</u>	<u>4 Wks.</u> <u>- 3 Mths.</u>	<u>3-6</u> <u>Mths.</u>	<u>6-12</u> <u>Mths.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Pneumonia.....	-	-	-	2	-	2
Intestinal Obstruction.....	-	-	1	-	-	1
Congenital Malformations.....	2	1	-	-	-	3
Pneumonia of newborn.....	1	-	-	-	-	1
* Other diseases peculiar to early infancy.....	9	-	-	-	-	9
Causes ill-defined and unknown.	-	-	-	1	-	1
Birth Injuries, etc.....	3	-	1	-	-	4
	15	1	2	3	-	21

* All premature births.

The Infantile Mortality Rates for the past five years are as follows.-

1947.....	36
1948.....	41
1949.....	34
1950.....	30
1951.....	36

MARRIAGES:- /

MARRIAGES:-

The marriages numbered 143, equivalent to a rate of 6.2 per 1000 Estimated Population. The figure last year was 150, giving a rate of 6.6 per 1000 of Estimated Population.

DEATHS:-

Deaths from all causes, and corrected for transfers, numbered 307, of which 130 were males and 177 females, giving a corrected and adjusted rate of 10.3 per 1000 Estimated Population. The figure for 1951 was 11.9.

As mentioned in previous reports, longevity is still a marked feature of the people of the County. Last year people of 65 years and over accounted for 73.7% of all deaths - this year the percentage is 68.7; those of 75 and over last year accounted for 50.7% of all deaths - this year the figure is 46.9%; and while those of 85 years and over provided 14.9% of all deaths last year, this year the figure is 13.6%.

AGES AT DEATH:-

	<u>Landward</u> <u>Area.</u>	<u>Wick</u> <u>Burgh.</u>	<u>Thurso</u> <u>Burgh.</u>
Under 1 year.....	8	12	1
1 - 4 "	-	-	-
5 - 9 "	-	1	-
10 - 14 "	-	-	-
15 - 24 "	1	-	-
25 - 34 "	4	1	2
35 - 44 "	6	4	1
45 - 54 "	9	6	4
55 - 64 "	17	12	7
65 - 74 "	37	22	9
75 - 84 "	66	21	15
85 years and over.....	30	10	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	178	88	41
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

CAUSES OF DEATH:- /

	<u>Landward Area.</u>	<u>Wick Burgh.</u>	<u>Thurso Burgh.</u>
Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....	2	2	1
Tuberculosis, other forms.....	1	1	-
Syphilis and its sequelae.....	-	1	-
Other infectious and parasitis diseases.....	1	-	1
Malignant Neoplasms.....	22	11	7
Diabetes mellitus.....	1	2	-
Anaemias.....	-	1	-
Other general diseases.....	1	2	-
Vascular lesions affecting central nervous system.....	21	11	5
Other diseases of nervous system.....	3	2	-
Chronic rheumatic heart disease.....	1	1	-
Arteriosclerotic and degenerative heart disease.....	72	22	12
Other diseases of heart.....	3	2	-
Hypertension with heart disease.....	1	1	-
Hypertension without heart disease.....	1	-	2
Other circulatory disease.....	5	3	4
Influenza.....	2	-	-
Pneumonia.....	1	1	1
Bronchitis.....	3	3	-
Other respiratory diseases.....	2	3	-
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.....	2	-	-
Intestinal obstruction and hernia.....	1	1	-
Other digestive diseases.....	-	1	-
Nephritis and nephrosis.....	5	-	-
Hyperplasia of prostate.....	-	-	2
Diseases of skin and organs of locomotion...	1	1	1
Congenital malformations.....	-	2	1
Birth injuries, post natal asphyxia and atelectasis.....	2	2	-
Pneumonia of newborn.....	-	1	-
Other diseases peculiar to early infancy....	4	5	-
Fertility.....	10	5	-
Cause ill-defined and unknown.....	4	-	1
Motor vehicle accidents.....	-	-	1
Other violence.....	6	1	2
	<u>178</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>41</u>

MATERNAL MORTALITY:-

There were no maternal deaths in the County during the year.

CARE OF MOTHERS AND YOUNG CHILDREN:-

(a) Ante-natal and Post-natal Clinics.-

Ante-natal and post-natal work is carried out at one of the Clinics in the County and, in addition, each month the services of a visiting Consultant Gynaecologist and Obstetrician are available at Wick and Thurso/

Thurso for patients referred by their own doctors.

The number attending at the Clinic for examination was.-

Number attending.....	22
Number of attendances.....	118

(b) Child Welfare Clinics.-

The Child Welfare Clinics in the County at Wick and Thurso continue to be well attended and the number attending and the attendances made were.-

	<u>Under 1 year.</u>	<u>1-5 years.</u>
Number attending.....	204	102
Number of attendances.....	3204	1846

(c) Dental Care.-

There is only one Dental Officer employed by Caithness County Council and his services are fully utilised in school dental work, including orthodontic treatment. It has not yet been found possible to provide treatment for expectant and nursing mothers and for pre-school children.

(d) Mother and Baby Homes.- None.

(e) Day Nurseries.- None.

(f) Residential Nurseries and Children's Homes provided as part of the Authority's arrangements under Section 22 of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act, 1947.-

None.

(g) Nurseries and Child Minders Regulation Act, 1948.-

None.

MIDWIFERY:-

(i) The total number of births occurring in the area during the year was.-

Live Births.....	370
Still Births.....	8
	<hr/>
	378
	<hr/>

(ii) Total number of births occurring in institutions..... 287

(iii) total number of births occurring at home..... 91

(iv) Number of births occurring at home classified to show nature of attendance at birth.-

Cases/

	<u>Midwives employed by Authority (including those engaged on a fee-per-case basis.</u>	<u>Private practising Midwives.</u>
<u>Cases dealt with under Section 22(2) of the National Health Service (Scotland) Act, 1947.-</u>		
Doctor engaged and present at confinement.....	53	-
Doctor engaged and not present at confinement.....	38	-
Midwife alone (no doctor engaged).....	-	-
<u>Other Domiciliary Cases.-</u>		
Doctor and midwife engaged....	-	-
Midwife alone (no doctor engaged)	-	-
Without doctor or midwife.....	-	-
	<hr/> 91 <hr/>	<hr/> - <hr/>

The tendency for confinements to take place in institutions continues to increase. Last year 69.5% of all births occurring in the area took place in institutions; this year the figure has risen to 75.9%.

(v) Medical Aid under Section 22(1) of the Midwives (Scotland) Act, 1915.-

Number of cases in which medical aid was summoned during the year by a midwife.-

(a) For Domiciliary Cases.-

- (i) Where the medical practitioners had arranged to provide maternity medical services under the National Health Service..... 0
- (ii) Others..... 0

(b) For cases in institutions..... 0

(vi) Administration of Analgesics.-

(a) Number of midwives in practice in the area qualified to administer analgesics in accordance with the requirements of the Central Midwives Board for Scotland.-

(i) Domiciliary.....12

(b) Number of domiciliary midwives who received their training during the year..... 0

(c) Number of sets of apparatus for the administration of analgesics in use at 31st December, 1952, by domiciliary midwives employed by the Authority.....11

(d)/

- (d) Number of sets on order at 31st December, 1952..... 0
- (e) Number of cases in which analgesics were administered by midwives in domiciliary practice during the year.-
- (i) When doctor was not present at delivery..... 20
- (ii) When doctor was present at delivery..... 17
- (f) Number of cases in which pethidine was administered by midwives in domiciliary practice during the year.-
- (i) When doctor was not present at delivery..... 13
- (ii) When doctor was present at delivery..... 23
- (viii) Number of cars in use by midwives at 31st December, 1952.. 13

HEALTH VISITING:-

The District Nurses in the County carry out Health Visiting work and during the year the following visits were made.-

	<u>First Visits.</u>	<u>Total Visits.</u>
Expectant Mothers.....	68	391
Children under 1 year of age.....	367	3350
Children 1-5 years.....	139	3834
Tuberculosis Cases.....	26	342
Other cases.....	38	38

HOME NURSING:-

Home nursing is carried out by the District Nurses and the following is a note of the number of cases and the number of visits paid during the year.-

Number of cases attended..... 2018
(Patients 65 years and over - 476)

Number of visits paid by nurses..... 38,625

DOMESTIC HELP SCHEME:-

- (i) Number of Home Helps employed during the year.-
- (a) Whole-time..... 0
- (b) Part-time..... 25
- (c) Retaining fee basis..... 0
- (ii) Number of cases for which Helps were provided during the year..... 38
- (iii) Number of cases in (ii) provided on account of confinement.-
- (a) at home..... 8
- (b) in hospital..... 5
- (iv) Number of cases in (ii) provided on account of chronic sick including aged and infirm..... 19

Increasing use continues to be made of the Home Help Scheme, especially in the case of aged sick who cannot be admitted immediately to Forse House.

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION:-/

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION:-

A pamphlet prepared by the Medical Officer of Health indicating the desirability of infant vaccination and urging that the operation be carried out before the child reaches the age of six months, is handed by the Registrar of Births and Deaths to every person registering a birth.

The scheme for immunisation against diphtheria continues to function satisfactorily.

The number of vaccinations carried out during the year is as follows.-

Primary Vaccinations.-

Typical vaccinia greatest at 7th-10th day.....	91
Accelerated (Vaccinoid) Reaction 5th-7th day.....	-
Reaction greatest at 2nd-3rd day.....	-
No local reaction.....	3

Re-Vaccination.-

Typical vaccinia greatest at 7th-10th day.....	14
Accelerated (Vaccinoid) Reaction 5th-7th day.....	2
Reaction greatest at 2nd-3rd day.....	10
No local reaction.....	1

The following are the numbers immunised during the year.-

	<u>Number of children who completed full course.</u>	<u>Number of Maintenance Inoculations.</u>
Pre-school children.....	323	-
School children.....	69	445
	<hr/> 392 <hr/>	<hr/> 445 <hr/>

PREVENTION OF ILLNESS, CARE AND AFTER-CARE:-

TUBERCULOSIS:-

The Clinics established at Wick and Thurso continue to be well attended. The general practitioners make increasing use of the Clinics for cases requiring investigation.

Extra Nourishment supplied during the year.-

Number of patients to whom milk was granted..... 22

In all notified cases of tuberculosis - respiratory and non-respiratory - routine investigation is made of the milk supply with a view to ascertaining the possibility of the milk being a source of infection. On these investigations the services of the Veterinary Inspectors of the Ministry of Agriculture were readily available.

The following Tables show the number of cases notified in the County (including the Burghs) in 1952, the number in which diagnosis was confirmed, the number in institutions, the number in the area known to be suffering from tuberculosis as at 31st December, 1952, and the number of deaths during the year.-

I. RETURN OF CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR.- /

I. RETURN OF CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR.-

	Under 5.	5-10.	10-15.	15-25.	25-35.	35-45.	45-65.	65+.	Total
<u>Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	1	-	-	3	2	-	1	7
Females.....	-	-	2	4	2	-	-	-	8
Total.....	-	1	2	4	5	2	-	1	15
<u>Non-Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
Females.....	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total.....	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	5
<u>Respiratory and Non-Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	1	1	2	3	2	-	1	10
Females.....	-	1	2	4	2	-	-	-	10
Total.....	1	2	3	6	5	2	-	1	20

II. RETURN OF CASES NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR IN WHICH DIAGNOSIS HAS BEEN
CONFIRMED.-

	Under 5.	5-10.	10-15.	15-25.	25-35.	35-45.	45-65.	65+.	Total
<u>Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	1	6
Females.....	-	-	2	4	2	-	-	-	8
Total.....	-	-	2	4	5	2	-	1	14
<u>Non-Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Females.....	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total.....	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
<u>Respiratory and Non-Respiratory.-</u>									
Males.....	-	-	1	1	3	2	-	1	8
Females.....	1	1	2	4	2	-	-	-	10
Total.....	1	1	3	5	5	2	-	1	18

III. RETURN SHOWING THE NUMBER OF CASES WITH THEIR HOME RESIDENCE IN THE AREA
WHO RECEIVED TREATMENT IN SANATORIA OR OTHER INSTITUTIONS DURING THE YEAR.-

	In Institns. on 1/1/52.	Admitted 1952.	Discharg- ed 1952.	Died in Institns.	In Institns. 31/12/52.
<u>Respiratory.-</u>					
Adults (Males	8	9	8	1	8
(Females	9	9	5	1	12
Children (Males	-	1	1	-	-
(Females	-	2	-	-	2
<u>Non-Respiratory.-</u>					
Adults (Males	1	4	2	-	3
(Females	1	1	-	-	2
Children (Males	-	2	2	-	-
(Females	-	2	2	-	-
Total...	19	30	20	2	27

IV. RETURN OF NUMBER OF PERSONS RESIDENT IN THE AREA AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1952,
WHO WERE FOUND TO BE SUFFERING FROM TUBERCULOSIS.-

		Under 5.	5-10.	10-15.	15-25.	25-35.	35-45.	45-65.	65+.	Total
<u>Respiratory.-</u>										
1. Sputum or other	M.	-	-	-	2	10	9	-	1	22
material examined										
and tubercle bacilli	F.	-	-	2	10	5	4	-	-	21
found.										
2. Sputum or other	M.	-	-	1	3	6	4	1	-	15
material examined										
and tubercle bacilli	F.	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	4
never found.										
3. Sputum or other	M.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
material not examined	F.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total.....										
		-	-	3	17	23	17	1	1	62
<u>Non-Respiratory.-</u>										
Abdominal.....	M.	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	F.	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	-	6
Spine.....	M.	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	4
	F.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Bones & Joints	M.	-	-	1	2	1	1	1	-	6
(Exclusive of spine)	F.	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
Superficial Glands...	M.	1	-	2	2	-	1	-	-	6
	F.	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Lupus.....	M.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other parts or organs	M.	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	5
	F.	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Total.....										
		2	4	5	10	4	8	3	-	36
Respiratory and Non- Respiratory Total.....										
		2	4	8	27	27	25	4	1	98

V. RETURN OF NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO DIED FROM TUBERCULOSIS IN THE AREA DURING
THE YEAR WITH PARTICULARS AS TO PERIOD ELAPCING BETWEEN NOTIFICATION AND
DEATH AND BETWEEN DISCHARGE FROM AN INSTITUTION AND DEATH.- /

V. RETURN OF NUMBER OF PERSONS WHO DIED FROM TUBERCULOSIS IN THE AREA DURING THE YEAR WITH PARTICULARS AS TO PERIOD ELAPSING BETWEEN NOTIFICATION AND DEATH AND BETWEEN DISCHARGE FROM AN INSTITUTION AND DEATH.-

	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Number of persons who died from Tuberculosis.....	2	3	2	1
Of whom -				
Not notified or notified only at or after death.....	1	1	1	1
Notified less than 1 month before death.....	-	-	-	-
Notified from 1-3 months before death.....	-	-	-	-
Notified from 3-6 months before death.....	-	-	-	-
Notified 6-12 months before death.....	-	-	-	-
Notified from 1-2 years before death.....	-	-	1	-
Notified over 2 years before death.....	1	2	-	-
Total.....	2	3	2	1
Number who died within 28 days after discharge from an institution	-	-	-	-
Number who died more than 28 days after discharge from an institution	1	2	-	-

The following are the Tuberculosis cases notified, and the Tuberculosis deaths, during the past ten years.-

Year.	Notifications.		Deaths.	
	Respiratory.	Non-Respiratory.	Respiratory.	Non-Respiratory.
1942	22	12	8	5
1943	31	7	9	-
1944	17	18	11	5
1945	23	15	7	4
1946	18	27	8	4
1947	18	12	6	2
1948	13	19	11	-
1949	22	12	5	1
1950	18	5	11	2
1951	10	8	4	1

CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE:-

There were 36 notifications of infectious disease received during the year. The cases notified were.-

Acute Primary Pneumonia.....	7
Pneumonia (Not otherwise notifiable).....	1
Cerebro-spinal Fever.....	1
Puerperal Fever.....	1
Puerperal Pyrexia.....	1
Scarlet Fever.....	17
Whooping cough.....	8
	<hr/>
	36
	<hr/>

Scarlet Fever.-

17 cases were notified and all were of a very mild nature.

Puerperal Fever and Puerperal Pyrexia.-

One case of Puerperal Fever and one of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified and removed to hospital. Both patients made uneventful recoveries.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE.-

No outstanding problems have occurred during the year, but the need for an institution in the north for mental defectives is still felt keenly. It is hoped that in the near future the services of a Psychiatrist will be available for Caithness.

PORT HEALTH ADMINISTRATION:-

In terms of the Port Sanitary Regulations (Scotland) 1935, 12 Declarations of Health were received from the Officers of H.M. Customs at Wick and Thurso.

FOOD SUPPLY:-

A more detailed account of the work of the County Public Health Department in this field will be found in the County Sanitary Inspector's Report. No incidents have occurred in connection with milk, ice cream, meat or other food supplies.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.-

As stated in the Report last year, the demand for accommodation in Forse House continues to be heavy, more especially for cases of chronic sick, and, in view of the ageing population and the natural longevity of the people in Caithness, this demand will continue to increase.

NURSING HOMES REGISTRATION (SCOTLAND) ACT:-

There are no Nursing Homes in the County.

HEALTH EDUCATION:- /

HEALTH EDUCATION:-

Leaflets and pamphlets received from various organisations are distributed to Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics and schools.

GENERAL SANITATION:-

No problems of any magnitude occurred in the County during the year. As in previous years the water supplies to some districts continued to be inadequate during spells of dry weather, but no acute shortages were reported.

REVIEW OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY UNDER PART III
OF THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1947.

Dr. McCoubrey relinquished the post of Medical Officer of Health in August, 1952, and I did not take up duty until January, 1953. I shall deal with the Services as they exist at the time of writing this report, (May, 1953).-

C.-operation with General Practitioners and the Hospital Services.-

The appointment here combines the duties of Medical Officer of Health with those of District Hospitals Officer, which includes administrative duties at all the hospitals in the County and clinical responsibility for tuberculosis and infectious diseases. This arrangement obviates many of the difficulties which appear to have been experienced in other areas through lack of liaison between Public Health and Hospital staffs. During the short time I have been in Caithness, I have found officials of the Regional Board and Caithness Board of Management most helpful and co-operative. My clinical duties have enabled me to have frequent personal contact with the general practitioners in the area and, on the whole, situations where the duties of Public Health officers and general practitioners tend to overlap have been dealt with satisfactorily.

Control of Infectious Disease.-

My own duties at the Town and County Hospital, Wick, make me familiar with the situation as regards infectious disease in the County. As medical cases are frequently sent to the main hospital in Inverness, patients admitted there are sometimes found to be suffering from tuberculosis or other infectious disease or come in contact with infections while in hospital. Where this has occurred, notification has been promptly received from the appropriate authorities in Inverness.

The Diphtheria Immunisation Scheme has been carried on successfully. In addition to immunisation done by the family doctors, pre-school children are immunised at Child Welfare Clinics in Wick and Thurso and at country schools. School children are immunised at the time of school medical inspections. Few parents fail to avail themselves of this service.

It is proposed to offer combined prophylaxis against diphtheria and whooping cough in the near future. Recently supplies of gamma-globulin for passive immunisation against measles for special cases have become available and can be obtained from Inverness.

Poliomyelitis and the more severe epidemic forms of gastro-enteritis in children have fortunately so far been infrequently encountered in this County.

Tuberculosis.-

As yet B.C.G. has not been used in Caithness. Routine tuberculin testing of contacts has now been organised and B.C.G. vaccination will be begun soon. Free milk and cod liver oil and malt are supplied to patients and contacts as necessary.

Lack of beds in sanatoria makes it necessary to treat a few open cases of tuberculosis at home. Advice as to prevention of infection is given to those patients and home circumstances receive due consideration in allocating priority/

priority for admission.

Nearly all the milk sold in the County is either pasteurised or tuberculin tested. It is proposed to make Thurso and Wick "Specified Areas" for the sale of milk.

Maternity and Child Welfare Services.-

Local Authority Child Welfare Clinics are held in Wick and Thurso and are well attended. Ante-natal clinics are held monthly at Wick and Thurso Hospitals where patients are seen by visiting Obstetricians from Inverness. This arrangement was in force even before the National Health Service Act. Most patients also receive ante-natal care from their general practitioners. Approximately 75% of the births in Caithness take place in institutions where the patients are attended by their own family doctors. In emergencies the services of the County Surgeon are available. In cases where serious complications are expected, the patients are sent to Raigmore Hospital, Inverness.

Home Helps have been supplied usually to enable a mother to go into hospital for her confinement, but also in some cases for births at home. In midwifery cases it has nearly always been possible to provide this service where it has been requested.

Co-operation with general practitioners has been good but there appears to be some difference of opinion as to where their responsibility ends and that of the Consultant Obstetrician begins.

Domiciliary Care and After-Care.-

A survey was carried out by Dr. McCoubrey in 1951 which was published in the Health Bulletin of the Department of Health for Scotland. The old people surveyed were in the main healthier than might have been anticipated but their needs in respect of service were heavy, largely through the extensive demands of a small minority. The survey showed that about 1 in every 11 of the old people were considered to require domestic help and 1 in every 30 required nursing attention at least once daily. While the home help and nursing services provided by the County have been steadily increasing over the past years, the demand for those services still exceeds the supply and seems likely to continue to do so in the future. This also applies in the case of institutional accommodation for the aged and chronic sick. It has usually been possible to admit to general hospitals in Wick and Thurso elderly people suffering from acute medical or surgical conditions without undue delay. Progress has been made with the scheme for re-housing elderly persons in small houses.

Mental Health.-

A Psychiatric clinic was started in Wick in April, 1953. Clinics will be held monthly by visiting Psychiatrists from Inverness.

The care of the lower grade mental defectives is not entirely satisfactory. Some mentally defective children have been found places in special schools or institutions outwith the County. Some adult mental defectives are accommodated in Forse House. The majority are boarded out under guardianship.

Provision of an institution within the County for the mentally handicapped would be of great value and would also free more beds in Forse House for the aged and chronic sick.

There/

There has been little formal work done in the County in connection with either Mental Hygiene or Health Education but good work in this field is done by the district nurses in rural areas. At present 3 of the 17 district nurses in Caithness have the Health Visitor's Certificate and encouragement is being given to nurses who wish to take the Health Visitor's course.

So far there is no full-time Superintendent of District Nurses for the County but such an appointment is under consideration and would improve the co-ordination of the work of the nurses.

Research and Statistical Enquiry.-

Reference has already been made to the survey of the old people in Caithness carried out by Dr. McCoubrey. It is hoped that a survey of the sensitivity to tuberculin of the school children in the County may be undertaken at a later date.

Deaths from violence are comparatively infrequent in predominantly rural areas such as this one, but I have the impression that non-fatal accidents to children from tractors and other farm machinery are fairly common and enquiry might be made into this at a later date.

To sum up - the Schemes at present in operation under Part III of the National Health Service Act appear to be functioning satisfactorily, but there is room for further development especially in the field of the care of old people, mental hygiene and health education.

